

# Shopping for Groceries in Germany

This information is provided to you by your Army Community Service (ACS) Center. It is intended to provide some basic helpful hints should you choose to shop for food on the German economy. The identified stores are all within 3 kilometers of Ledward, and are of similar size and selection as the Commissary. There are many great German stores and ACSC encourages you to utilize the stores of your choice. The Federal Government and the Department of the Army do not endorse any business establishment and have not obtained any compensation, favorable treatment, coupons, discounts or the like from any of the mentioned business establishments.

If you have any questions or comments please call us!

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## **Shopping Carts:**

German stores have shopping carts available; here's how they work:

Shopping carts are typically located outside the store, either in the parking lot in cart corrals or at a central location near the entryway. The carts will all be chained together and you must insert a coin, usually a 1 Euro coin or a "cart token", into the slot located on the handle. Please take your cart into the store with you and return it to the cart corral when you are finished. When you insert the chain back into the cart you can remove your coin.

## **Shopping bags:**

With the exception of Marktkauf, the grocery stores in the area do not offer free shopping bags. You may either take your own bags with you, or purchase them for a minimal fee at the store. Depending on the type of bag, and the store, they usually cost between 5 and 25 Euro cents. Please also note that Germans typically put all their purchases back into their cart after making their purchase and bag them at their car. If you have a large purchase, please follow this custom. You may bring cloth, plastic or paper bags with you into the store. Many of the large stores ask that you not bring your own baskets in, as they may sell wares that are similar and this may cause confusion for their cashiers.

## **Payment:**

As a general rule you will have to pay for your purchase in cash with Euros. Most grocery stores do not accept credit or debit cards. If you see Germans paying with plastic, please be aware that they are probably using a debit card from a German bank. Some of the larger grocery stores have ATM machines located either in their lobby or nearby, but be aware that the German bank operating the ATM will charge you a fee for making a withdrawal. Your bank may also charge a fee for having used a foreign bank.

## **Bottle Deposits:**

Most glass and plastic beverage bottles in Germany have a deposit on them. Sometimes the deposit is more expensive than the actual price of the beverage. Check the bottle for the word "Pfand" or "Pfandflasche" which means deposit. If you see "Ohne Pfand" on the container, it has no deposit. The price displayed will not reflect the deposit. It will be listed separately next to the price of the item. Generally speaking, deposits will only be charged on beverage containers and glass jars of yogurt or Milk. Glass jars containing other food products such as: jelly, fruits, vegetables, pickles, sauces, oils, dressing, vinegar, etc... should not have a deposit on them. You can return glass and plastic bottles to the store when they are empty. Please rinse them briefly and put the cap back on. Stores all have different procedures for taking returns. You may see a large machine near the door which will sort your bottles and give you a receipt for the amount of the returned deposit. You must give this receipt to the cashier when you check out and she or he will reimburse you the amount of your returned deposit. If you lose the slip you will not be able to get your money back, so be careful.

## Packaging:



Many items in Europe are packaged in what is referred to as Tetra Package. These packages resemble what we commonly think of as a juice box. Many items such as fresh and shelf stable milk, many types of juices and other liquids are typically packaged this way. This type of packaging may make looking for the product you want a little more difficult at first. Just remember that if everything else looks right, it probably is the product you are looking for, even if the packaging is unfamiliar.

## Using the Deli section and the Meat departments:

Many large grocery stores have a Deli and Meat Department. The items are generally sold by weight in grams. Please see below for more information about weights. If you are buying cold cuts or sliced cheese you may also indicate the number of slices you would like. The German word for slice is “Scheibe” and slices is “Scheiben”. If you would like 5 slices of ham you would ask for:

Fuenf Scheiben Schinken bitte.

Most of the time you will find that there is a much wider variety of meats and cheeses than what you are used to seeing. If you are not sure what something is called, try pointing and using hand signals. You will usually have no problem getting what you need. Some helpful language tips are included in the vocabulary section at the end of this publication.

## Buying Fruits and Vegetables:

Loose fruits and vegetables are sold either by weight or as a unit. Most pre-packaged items, such as a bag of potatoes, net of oranges or bag of apples are sold as a unit. In many German stores you will have to weigh your own fruits and vegetables. One quick way to help you determine if you must weigh the items yourself is to look around the produce department and see if there are multiple scales. If so, you are probably going to have to weight items. Once you find the item you want you will need to determine if it is sold by weight or as a unit. If you can find the price, look to see if it indicates a price per 100grs or if it shows a price followed by the word. If a price per 100 grs is indicated you will have to weigh the item. If you see “Stuck” which means each or the abbreviated St. or “Schale” which means container, it means the item is sold by unit. The number which must be selected on the scale is usually indicated on the price shield, frequently in the upper right hand corner. Go to the nearest scale, place your item on it and select that number. There are usually pictures of the product on the scale’s button to help you figure out what number is for which product. Once you push the button a price sticker should be printed by the scale. Simply adhere this to your product or bag and it will be scanned

at the cash register. If all else fails, just take your selection to the cash register. There will be a scale somewhere near the front of the store and you can weigh your item there.

## Laundry Detergent:

German washing machines function differently from American ones. In a German machine the water enters the machine cold and is then heated by the machine. For this reason, German detergents are designed to dissolve only in cold water. If you are buying German detergent to be used in an American style machine, please be advised that you need to use liquid detergent.

## Weights and Measures:

1 Kilogram (1Kg) = 1000 Grams (1000gr) = 2.2 pounds

500 Grams (500gr) = 1.1 pound

Therefore 250 Grams is about ½ pound

and 125 is about ¼ pound

1 Liter (1l) = 1.06 quarts = 0.26 gallons

## Helpful Vocabulary

### **Beverages**      **Getränke**

Beer	Bier
Coffee	Kaffee
Juice	Saft
Apple Juice	Apfelsaft
Grape Juice	Traubensaft
Orange Juice	Orangensaft
Milk	Milch
Skim Milk	Fettarme Milch
Whole Milk	Vollmilch
Mineral Water	
	Minerawasser
Tea	Tee
Water	Wasser
Red Wine	Rotwein
White Wine	Weisswein

### **Fish and Seafood**

#### **Fisch Und Meeresfrüchte**

Crabs	Krabben
Lobster	Hummer
Salmon	Lachs
Shrimps	Garnelen
Trout	Forelle

### **Meat**              **Fleisch**

Beef	Rind
Game	Wild
Mutton	Hammel
Lamb	Lamm
Pork	Schwein
Veal	Kalb

### **Poultry**              **Geflügel**

Chicken	Hähnchen
Turkey	Truthahn
	or Pute
Duck	Ente
Goose	Gans

### **Cold Cuts**              **Wurst**

Ham	Schinken
Bologna	Bierschinken
Salami	Salami
Liverwurst	Leberwurst
Hotdogs	Wiener

**Vegetables**      **Gemüse**

Artichokes	Artischocken
Beans	Bohnen
Beets	Rote Beets
Brussel Sprouts	
	Rosenkohl
Carrots	Karotten
Cauliflower	Blumenkohl
Corn	Mais
Cucumbers	Gurken
Ginger	Ingwer
Mushrooms	Pilze/Champignons
Onions	Zwiebeln
Potatoes	Kartoffeln
Red Cabbage	Rotkraut
Salad	Salat
Sauerkraut	Sauerkraut
Spinach	Spinat
Tomato	Tomate
White Asparagus	
	Spargel

**Fruits**      **Obst**

Apple	Apfel
Banana	Banane
Cherries	Kirschen
Grapes	Trauben
Kiwi	Kiwi
Lemons	Zitronen
Oranges	Orangen
Peaches	Pfirsiche
Pears	Birnen
Pineapple	Ananas
Plums	Pflaumen
Raspberries	Himbeeren
Strawberries	Erdbeeren
Tangerine	Mandarine
Melons	Melonen

**Those Little Extras**

Baby Food	Babynahrung
Baking Supplies	
	Backartikel
Bread	Brot
Butter	Butter
Cereal	Cerealien
Cheese	Käse
Cleaner	Reiniger

Chips, Pretzels etc...

	Salzgebäck
Cookies	Kekse
Eggs	Eier
Deoderant	Deo
Diapers	Windeln
Dish Soap	Spülmittel
Fabric Softener	
	Weichspüler
Flour	Mehl
Frozen or Pre-prepared meals	
	Fertiggerichte
Honey	Honig
Horseradish	Meerrettich
Ice Cream	Eiscreme
Jelly	Marmelade
Kleenex	Taschentücher
Laundry Detergent	
	Waschmittel
Margarine	Margarine
Mustard	Senf
Napkins	Servietten
Noodles	Nudeln
Oatmeal	Haferflocken
Oil	Öl
Paper Towels	Küchentücher
	or Haushaltsrollen
Pepper	Pfeffer
Pet Food	Tiernahrung
Rice	Reis
Rolls	Brötchen
Salt	Salz
Soap	Seife
Soup	Suppe
Sour Cream	Saure Sahne
Spices	Gewürze
Sugar	Zucker
Toilet Paper	Toilettenpapier
Vinegar	Essig
Whip Cream	Schlagsahne
Yogurt	Joghurt
Cash Register	Kasse
Grocery Cart	Einkaufswagen
On Sale	Sonderangebot
Reduced (price)	
	Reduziert